1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3



NOTE.—The Kirghiz are described by the Chilâsis as having flat faces and small noses and are supposed to be very white and beautiful, to be Nomads and to feed on milk, butter and mutton.

The Chilâsis call the people between Hunza and the Pamêr [our Pamir] on the Yarkand road = Gójál.

There are also other Gojáls under a Raja of Gojál on the Badakhshán road.

The Chílâsis call the Siah Pôsh Kâfirs = Bashgalí (Bashgal is the name of the country inhabited by this people who enjoy the very worst reputation for cruelty). They are supposed to kill every traveller that comes within their reach and to cut his nose or ear off as a trophy.*

The Chilâsis were originally four tribes; viz.:

The Bagoté of Buner.
The Kané of Takk.
The Boté of the Chilâs fort.
The Matshuké of the Matshukó fort.

The Boté and the Matshuké fought. The latter were defeated, and are said to have fled into Astor and Little Tibet territory.

A Foreigner is called "ósho."

Fellow-countrymen are called "malêki."

The stature of the Dards is generally slender and wiry and well suited to the life of a mountaineer. They are now gradually adopting Indian clothes, and whilst this will displace their own rather picturesque dress and strong, though rough, indigenous manufacture, it may also render them less manly. They are fairer than the people of the plains (the women of Yasin being particularly beautiful and almost reminding one of European women), but on the frontier they are rather mixed—the Chilâsis with the

* The two Kafirs in my service in 1866, one of whom was a Bashgali, seemed inoffensive young men. They admitted drinking a portion of the blood of a killed enemy or eating a bit of his heart, but I fancy this practice proceeds more from bravado than appetite. In "Davies' Trade Report" I find the following Note to Appendix XXX., page CCCLXII. "The ruler of Chitrál is in the habit of enslaving all persons from the tribes of Kalásh, Dangini and Bashghali, idolaters living in the Chitrál territory."

101 from the Burzil Pass to the Sharot village, a distance of 143 miles from south-east to-
131 wards north-west with its small surrounding valleys of Kamri, Tarsing, Parising, Sai, Haramosh and Bagrot; and along the Hunza river from Gilgit to Guech, with its adjacent valley of Naltar, a distance of 24 miles.

125 The country was first conquered in 1846 by the troops of His Highness the Maha-
631 raja of Kashmir under Syed Nathe Shah from Gauhar Aman, the Khushwakti Chief of Yasin, who had usurped the district from Sikander Khan and his brother Karim Khan, the rightful rulers of Gilgit. Karim Khan had escaped to Kashmir to ask for help, and returned with a large force under Syed Nathe Shah. Hearing the news of their approach, Gauhar-Aman fled to Yasin, leaving the country to be possessed by them without bloodshed. The country was restored to the rightful rulers, but some later events lead the Maharaja of Kashmir to keep the district under the direct jurisdiction of
[648] his own officials. The British Agency was established in 1889. The Political Agent, an officer of the Government of India, and the Wazir-i-Wazarat, an official of His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir, have their headquarters at Gilgit proper. The latter has jurisdiction over the district only, while the former, in addition to his control over Gilgit, has political relations with the surrounding states of Hunza, Nagir, Punial, Ishkuman, Yasin, Ghizr and the Chilas republic, which all acknowledge the surerainty of the Kashmir Durbar. Gilgit is garrisoned by Kashmir Imperial Service Troops under a General Officer Commanding appointed by His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir. The troops are relieved every two years.

491 A good pony road runs between Srisagar, Gilgit, Chitral and Hunza, remaining
205 open for traffic from June to October. It is closed from November to May, owing to the
206 heavy fall of snow on the Tragbal (Rajdagan) and the Burzil passes. However, the ordinary letter post is carried across the passes at favourable opportunities by local runners. Kashmir, Gilgit and Chitral are also connected by a telegraph line.

162 The present inhabitants of the country are all Muhammadans, chiefly of the Shia
795 sect, with a few Sunnis and Maulais. The principal tribes are Ronos, Shins, Yeshkuns
619 Kashmiris, Kramins, Dums and Gujars. They are again divided into several families
101 called after the names of distinguished ancestors. I am of the opinion that the
[174] Kramins are the original inhabitants of Gilgit, while the Yeshkuns, Shins and Ronos came afterwards in the above order and conquered the former inhabitants.

101 The Yeshkuns are probably an Aryan race, having arrived from Central Asia *viâ*
619 the Hindu Kush. Being stronger than the aborigines, they succeeded in conquering
523 these districts, made the original inhabitants their servants and named them "Kramins" (attendants).

101 The Shins profess to be the descendants of Arabs. They are probably Jews, and
[795] have come *viâ* Afghanistan from either Persia or Turkey. They prefer a style of self-
619 government, and endeavour wherever they settle to continue this form of their original government. It is of interest to note, however, that before embracing Islam the Shins, in this resembling the Hindus, disliked meat, milk or even *ghi* made from cow's milk, disapproved of the keeping of fowls and regarded even a fish diet with aversion. If a Shin had taken two wives, one of his own tribe and the other of the Yeshkun tribe, the children

of the former would be Shins and those of the latter would be Yeshkuns. This shows that their family system takes the mother into consideration. 101 619

The Ronos are said to have come from Rajauri, a district in Kashmir, where they belonged to a ruling family of the district.

The Gujars have recently come to these parts and speak the same dialect as in India. [197]

Besides these, there is another family of the former Muhammadan rulers of the country called "Ra." They originally came from Skardu about three centuries ago, and professed to be the descendants of Alexander the Great. The inhabitants considered [563] them to have been born of a fairy, and this idea leads the people to think that their rulers [174] were of a superior race touching on the divine, and that therefore it was necessary to honour and obey them.

The people live very simply, and their requirements are few. Each one is himself 511 a cultivator, a weaver, a carpenter, etc. Their dress, which they weave from the 291 wool of sheep and ibex, includes the *shuka* (cloak), woollen pantaloons, a woollen shirt and 286 a rolled cap. The women wear loose trousers, a shirt and a cap, with a few silver 463 ornaments and shell brooches. They wear on their feet a kind of leather socks called *pukkhe*, made either of ibex skin or of cow hide. For hill journeys they wrap their feet in pieces of goat or ibex skin which they call *thanti*.

The chief amusement of the people is polo, which they play with the utmost zest, and 526 shooting markhor, ibex and oorial with their matchlocks for the sake of meat, skin and 224 wool. 411

The former language of the people was Sanskrit, but the dialect now spoken is 197 generally called "Shina," though the Chitralis call it "Dangrik." It contains many Sanskrit as well as Persian words.

Such are the tribes to whom the folklore and customs appertain, but they have lived 171 together for such a long period under the Buddhist and Muhammadan rulers that it is now 791 difficult to know which of the ceremonies was originally observed by each separate tribe.

## I.*

### The Festival of "Shino Bascoo."

The advent of spring in the Gilgit country brings with it the quaint festival of 776 "Shino Bascoo," which corresponds to the English May-day. It lasts about fifteen days, 252 beginning in the middle of February and ending about the beginning of March. As indicating that the long cold winter is at an end with all its accompanying hardships, and that spring is nigh, bringing with it warmth and life and a renewal of the scanty stock of provisions which has run dangerously low during the past months, the festival is hailed with much rejoicing by the simple Gilgit folk. In order to observe this feast rightly, the people, twelve days before its commencement, put ten seers of wheat into a wooden basin. They fill this up with water and keep the mixture wet for five days, after which they take it out and place it in a small pit dug for the purpose in the ground, over which stones are heaped. The wheat is left in this pit for four days, after which the grain is sent

*[See also p. 108, para. 104.]